

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1 - 14 (Cancelled).

15. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor circuit which comprises the steps of transferring the patterns formed on the chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift photomask ~~as set forth in claim 13~~ , being prepared by performing a series of pattern-forming steps such as a step for forming a resist layer on a photomask blank, a step for exposing and patterning said resist layer, a developing step, a step for etching said photomask blank and a step for removing said resist layer, wherein the photomask is characterized in that patterns to be transferred onto a wafer are formed on said photomask blank for the chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift photomask according to the dry-etching method comprising dry-etching a metal thin film as a chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift film, wherein the method is characterized by using, as an etching gas, a mixed gas including (a) a reactive ion etching gas, which contains an oxygen-containing gas and a halogen-containing gas, and (b) a reducing gas added to the gas component (a), in the process for dry-etching the metal thin film, on a wafer on which a light-sensitive material is coated, developing said light-sensitive material to form resist patterns on the wafer, or to manufacture a semiconductor circuit which comprises coexisting coarse and dense patterns corresponding to said resist patterns.

16. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor circuit which comprises the steps of transferring the patterns formed on the chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift photomask ~~as set forth in claim 14~~ , being prepared by performing a series of pattern-forming steps such as a step for forming a resist layer on a photomask blank, a step for exposing and patterning said resist layer, a developing step, a step for etching said photomask blank and a step for removing said resist layer, wherein the photomask is characterized in

that patterns to be transferred onto a wafer are formed on said photomask blank for the chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift photomask according to the dry-etching method comprising dry-etching a metal thin film as a chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift film, wherein the method is characterized by using, as an etching gas, a mixed gas including (a) a reactive ion etching gas, which contains an oxygen-containing gas and a halogen-containing gas, and (b) a reducing gas added to the gas component (a), in the process for dry-etching the metal thin film, wherein said metal thin film is a chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift film consisting of a chromium film, a chromium oxide film, a chromium nitride film, chromium oxynitride film, chromium fluoride film or a laminated film thereof, on a wafer on which a light-sensitive material is coated, developing said light-sensitive material to form resist patterns on the wafer, or to manufacture a semiconductor circuit which comprises coexisting coarse and dense patterns corresponding to said resist patterns.

17. (Currently Amended) A semiconductor circuit having a circuit which comprises coexisting coarse and dense patterns corresponding to the resist patterns formed by transferring said resist patterns formed on the chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift photomask ~~as set forth in claim 13,~~ being prepared by performing a series of pattern-forming steps such as a step for forming a resist layer on a photomask blank, a step for exposing and patterning said resist layer, a developing step, a step for etching said photomask blank and a step for removing said resist layer, wherein the photomask is characterized in that patterns to be transferred onto a wafer are formed on said photomask blank for the chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift photomask according to the dry-etching method comprising dry-etching a metal thin film as a chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift film, wherein the method is characterized by using, as an etching gas, a mixed gas including (a) a reactive ion etching gas, which contains an oxygen-containing gas and a halogen-containing gas, and (b) a reducing gas added to the gas component (a), in the process for dry-etching

the metal thin film, on a wafer on which a light-sensitive material is coated and then developing said light-sensitive material.

18. (Currently Amended) A semiconductor circuit having a circuit which comprises coexisting coarse and dense patterns corresponding to the resist patterns formed by transferring said resist patterns formed on the chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift photomask ~~as set forth in claim 14~~, being prepared by performing a series of pattern-forming steps such as a step for forming a resist layer on a photomask blank, a step for exposing and patterning said resist layer, a developing step, a step for etching said photomask blank and a step for removing said resist layer, wherein the photomask is characterized in that patterns to be transferred onto a wafer are formed on said photomask blank for the chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift photomask according to the dry-etching method comprising dry-etching a metal thin film as a chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift film, wherein the method is characterized by using, as an etching gas, a mixed gas including (a) a reactive ion etching gas, which contains an oxygen-containing gas and a halogen-containing gas, and (b) a reducing gas added to the gas component (a), in the process for dry-etching the metal thin film, wherein said metal thin film is a chromium-containing half-tone phase-shift film consisting of a chromium film, a chromium oxide film, a chromium nitride film, chromium oxynitride film, chromium fluoride film or a laminated film thereof, on a wafer on which a light-sensitive material is coated and then developing said light-sensitive material.

Claims 19 - 20 (Cancelled).